

ATTEST:

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 9-88

February 29, 1988

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Work Session in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson, Rockville, Maryland, on Monday, February 29, 1988, at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilman Steve Abrams
(Arrived at 9:00 pm)

Councilman James Coyle

Councilwoman Viola Hovsepian

Councilman David Robbins

In attendance: City Attorney Paul Glasgow, City Clerk Helen M. Heneghan, and Acting City Manager Rick Kuckkahn.

Re: Work Session -
Economic Development Council

Chairman Craig Falk and member Ken Kuscher met with the Mayor and Council and discussed the following items:

1. Economic Development Council's participation with the proposed growth policy group for input into possible Master Plan update.

The Mayor noted that advertisements will be appearing in Rockville Reports shortly, asking for participation in this forecast group. The plan is for the group to meet for six months and produce a report for the Mayor and Council.

2. Request for budget appropriation in support of future small business forums and other elements of a small business development program.

The Economic Development Council suggested the small business seminar program be continued. The Mayor and Council agreed that this should be done on a quarterly basis and asked that it be budgeted.

3. Discussion on the feasibility of a small business incubator in Rockville.

More information will be provided to the Mayor and Council on the incubator before a final decision is made.

4. The Economic Development Council's involvement in the promotion in the Town Center.

The Mayor and Council welcomed the participation of the Economic Development Council. A request has been made by the Eisinger Development personnel for more City participation. The Mayor and Council asked that a copy of the letter from Eisinger be provided to the Economic Development Council. The Economic Development Council responded that they plan to assist as they can.

The Economic Development Council made the following suggestions to the Council:

A. Continue to offer small business forums on topics of interest to the small business owner and entrepreneur as long as this program remains popular.

B. A brochure should be written with the dual purpose of (1) marketing Rockville as a good environment for business, and (2) highlighting the many strengths which make Rockville an excellent residential community.

C. Continue the good working relationship with the Center for Small Business of Montgomery College, the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce and the High Technology Council of Montgomery County. Continue to refer the small business owner and

entrepreneur to these organizations for the various assistance programs which they offer.

D. Continue to assist the small business owner with the licenses and permit process in Rockville.

E. Continue to provide location assistance to small business owners searching for space in Rockville. A computerized inventory of available space could be established and periodically updated as a reference tool. Buildings that could accommodate the small business owner should be identified and landlords encouraged to provide small space in commercial buildings.

F. Research a long range plan of developing a business incubator program in Rockville.

G. Maintain an inventory of State and Federal financial assistance programs that are beneficial to the small business owner.

H. Make contacts with private lending institutions that assist or specialize in loans to small businesses.

I. Maintain a library of Federal, State, County and local information which may be of particular interest to the small business owner.

J. Develop a technical assistance program in areas such as "how to get into business" and "how to write a business plan".

The Mayor and Council thanked the Economic Development Council for their participation.

Re: Work Session - Rockville Pike
Continuation of Work Session
on Transportation

1. Peoplemover Feasibility Study

The staff explained that they are prepared to award a contract in November. The UMTA grant is \$195,000.00, and Rockville's participation is

\$25,000.00 in in-kind services.

2. Neighborhood Protection

The staff reviewed the cellular concept of traffic control. They explained that controlling neighborhood traffic always limits accessibility to the outside from the neighborhood and many of the plans are unacceptable to the neighbors as they have found in the Montrose area. In the Hungerford neighborhood, the Fleet Street extension will have a positive effect on the neighborhood and no property will be taken for this.

3. Traffic Capacity

The Council discussed the Chapman Avenue changes and a comparison of identical development scenarios with and without Jefferson Parkway. It was agreed that many of the traffic situations are very difficult to predict because of the outside impacts.

4. Use of the Standard Traffic Methodology

The staff explained that this system is generally more accurate than modeling and serves in many instances as an adequate public facilities ordinance.

Parking Reductions

The staff explained the parking reductions were generally removed from the Zoning Ordinance except for the Town Center, unless the developer has an improved parking management plan.

The Mayor and Council discussed the Rockville Pike widening concept in depth. It was agreed that the best pedestrian situation would be overpasses at intersections.

The Mayor and Council agreed that their Thursday night Work Session would be devoted to Land Use.

Re: Appointment of Margaret R.
Gearin as City Clerk

Mayor Duncan stated that advertising for the Clerks position began in December and ran for one month. Twenty-two applications were received and after the interview process, three finalists were considered.

Councilman Abrams stated that he plans to abstain on the vote this evening and follow the precedent set by the Mayor two years ago because there should not be a negative vote on a new City Clerk. It is his feeling that there was another candidate more qualified, but he harbors no illusions of his own political strength. In his estimation, Mead Karras would have better served all parts of the City because of her background as former Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Elections and an employee of Montgomery County Historical Society. He suggested that the City Clerk should be able to work on a confidential basis with each and every Mayor and Council member. He disagreed with the salary and the conditions of employment, particularly the sixty day dismissal provision, since that had never pertained to Clerks in the past. In Councilman Abrams' opinion, the salary range advertised should apply as in other government agencies and begin at the lowest level. The relative experience and salary history of the City Clerk did not warrant the entry salary and the Mayor and Council should be objective in this instance since the City just subjected itself to a pay and classification study by the Hay systems and contracted for the Curry Consultants Report.

Councilman Robbins said tonight's vote is the happiest and most enthusiastic vote he has been able to make since he took office. Councilman Robbins said that Ms. Gearin is extremely well qualified and educated and her experience and temperament ideally suited her for the job. In addition, Councilman Robbins noted that Mrs. Gearin has spent much of her adult life

raising a family which in his estimation, is the greatest job and experience. He further noted that Mrs. Gearin is entering the work force after a superior academic experience. Councilman Robbins feels that she can serve as a role model for others and looks forward to this evenings vote.

Councilwoman Hovsepian took issue with Councilman Abrams' disapproval of the sixty day notice provision since it has been her experience that hiring a City Clerk takes a good deal of time and the City would have found itself in an extremely bad situation last summer when the Clerk left if they weren't able to bring in an interim clerk. Councilwoman Hovsepian said time is necessary to train and hire the new person. In her judgment, Mrs. Gearin was the best candidate for the job. Her excellence in recent education and background and when she served as an intern in the Governor's office and as an administrative assistant to Congresswoman Morella shows that she knows how to deal with people. All of Mrs. Gearin's references spoke highly of her ability to deal with people and her attention to detail. Another asset Councilwoman Hovsepian pointed out is that Mrs. Gearin has lived in Rockville for 34 years and during that time has been involved in the City. Mrs. Gearin showed a great deal of enthusiasm for the job, the same as she showed in the educational field, graduating Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa.

Councilman Coyle said all four members of the Council felt that Mrs. Gearin was the most qualified for the job and that there were no politics involved in the decision. The Mayor and Council interviewed people of all political stripe and Mrs. Gearin showed no evidence of difficulty in dealing with anyone. Councilman Coyle said Mrs. Gearin is being paid what she is worth. He was pleased to see that the process worked. It was time consuming

and exhausting. Many of those interviewed could have done the job, but Mrs. Gearin brings that best qualifications the Mayor and Council were looking for.

Mayor Duncan thanked Councilman Abrams for abstaining since a "No" vote for the Clerk would not be good for the City. He said he asked the City Attorney for the standard contract and a notice provision is standard in all City contracts, some of which are sixty day, but most of which are ninety and even one hundred and twenty days. The salary is within the range, and it is the City Manager's experience to usually bring in employees at the "B" range, noting this salary is between the "C" and "D" range. He is extremely impressed with Mrs. Gearin since he has known her and her family for many, many years. Mayor Duncan welcomed Mrs. Gearin's family to this evenings meeting and added that Mrs. Gearin's background, education experience and personal qualities will make her a great Clerk. Mayor Duncan welcomed Mrs. Gearin.

On motion of Councilwoman Hovsepien, duly seconded and passed, with Mayor Duncan and Councilmembers Coyle, Hovsepien and Robbins voting aye, and Councilman Abrams abstaining, Margaret Gearin was appointed City Clerk for an indefinite term to begin March 21, 1988.

Re: Executive Session

On motion of Councilman Coyle, duly seconded and passed by unanimous vote, the meeting was closed for Executive Session for consultation with legal counsel.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council in Executive Session, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. to convene again in Work Session on Thursday, March 3, 1988, at 7:30 p.m. or at the call of the Mayor.